shall be communicated to the State as early as possible, provided the proposals are complete in respect of Utilization Certificate etc. and subject to the availability of funds. In addition, a project proposal submitted by the Government of Rajasthan on supply of water to Keoladeo National Park has been forwarded to Planning commission for necessary action.

Forest cover in Tiger Reserves

1847. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a report titled "Forest Cover in Tiger Reserves in India, 2006" has revealed fast falling green cover in and around 28 tiger reserves;

(b) if so, whether this presents a new danger being faced by tiger population; and

(c) what plan of action, if any, has been prepared to restore their due forest cover for the tiger population?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) An assessment of the status of forest cover and its changes in all the 28 tiger reserves, during the period from 1997 to 2002, was carried out by the Project Tiger Directorate, through the Forest Survey of India. This also includes, for the first time, the status of the outer surrounding area of tiger reserves upto a radius of 10 km from their periphery. The details are at Statement (*see* below).

(b) and (c) The decrease in forest cover in the outer surround (10 km. radial distance from the periphery) of 21 tiger reserves highlights the need for restorative inputs in such areas to foster their corridor value. The States have been asked to delineate reserve specific impact zone around core areas of tiger reserves for their restoration involving local people.

Statement

Forest Cover in Tiger Reserves

Key Finding between 1997 and 2002

1. There is an increase in the forest cover of five Tiger Reserves, a decrease in 11 Tiger Reserves and no change in 12 Tiger Reserves.

2. Very dense forest and open forest in the 28 Tiger Reserves have shown an increase of 33 km^2 and 124 km^2 respectively, while moderately dense forest has decreased by 251 km^2.

3. Major loss in forest cover has occurred in Nameri, Buxa, Manas, Indravati and Dampa Tiger Reserves mainly due to socio-economic reasons and natural disasters.

4. Forest cover in the Outer Surround (10 km. radial distance from periphery) has increased in case of two Tiger Reserves, decreased in case of 21 Tiger Reserves and is unchanged in case of five Tiger Reserves.

5. The total forest cover in the Outer Surround of the 28 Tiger Reserves has decreased by 124 km^2.

Shifting of big cats

1848. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Sariska tiger reserve is not fit for tiger as per ecological analysis of the reserve; and

(b) if so, the measures taken to shift the big cats, if any, to a better habitat of tigers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) As advised by this Ministry, the State (Rajasthan), has submitted a recovery plan for Sariska Tiger Reserve, which includes reintroduction of tiger. The Wildlife Institute of India has recommended reintroduction of five tigers (three females and two males), subject to fulfillment of conditions for habitat recovery.

Clearance to Irrigation Projects

1849. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have given environmental and forest clearance to every major and medium irrigation project in the last two years;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that such clearances are being given on the approvals of DIG Forest level officers;